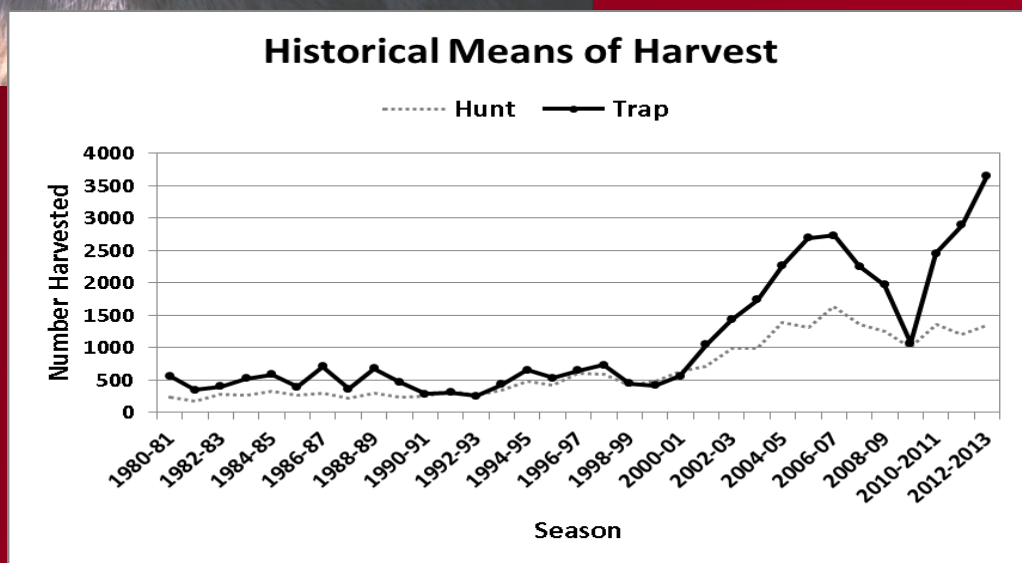
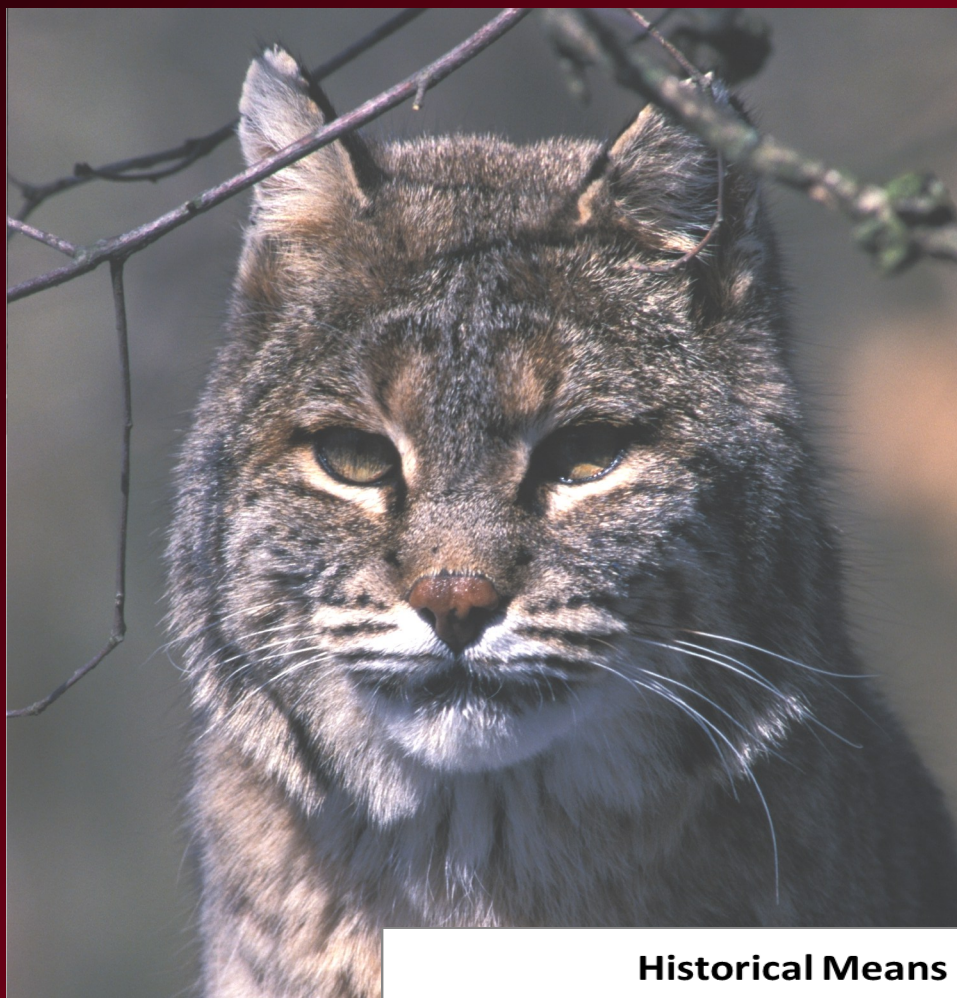




MDC Resource Science

Data Obtained from the Mandatory CITES Registration Provides Valuable Information on Bobcat Population

Science Notes



Data Obtained from the Mandatory CITES Registration Provides Valuable Information on Bobcat Population

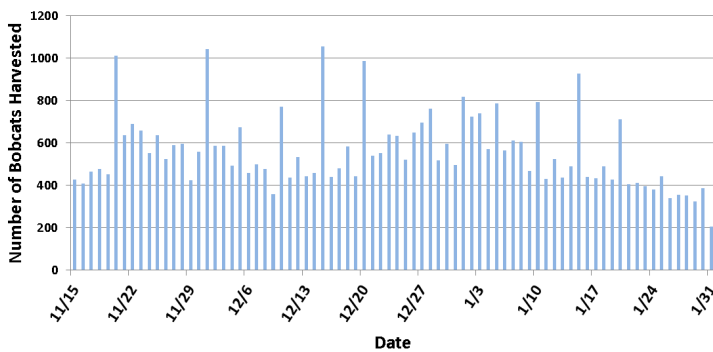
By Justan Blair and Jeff Beringer

Summary

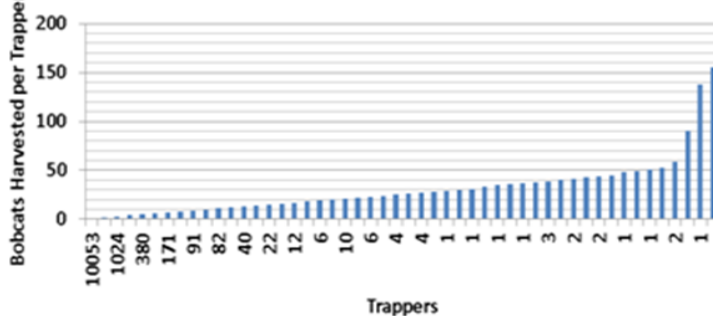
Bobcats are Missouri's most valuable furbearer. Monitoring harvest is important for setting appropriate regulations. During the first year of recorded harvests (1945), 118 cats were taken, but there was no regulated season. Bobcats were first regulated in 1963 but the season was subsequently closed in 1977. The season re-opened in 1980 for areas south of I-70, and opened statewide in 1999. The all-time record harvest of 5,059 was set in 2012.

Bobcats were listed as an Appendix II, "look-alike CITES species" in 1977, requiring that harvested animals be registered and tagged. MDC has been registering and collecting data on all harvested bobcats since 1980. Information collected during the registration/tagging process includes: harvest date, sex, location and method of take. These data are important for monitoring population trends and reconstructing populations for more robust analysis. Tagging bobcats provides MDC staff one-on-one contact with trappers and hunters. CITES data are often used by Conservation Agents to make cases for illegal harvest.

Historic Bobcat Harvest per Day (1980-2012)



Bobcats Harvested per Trapper (1999-2013)

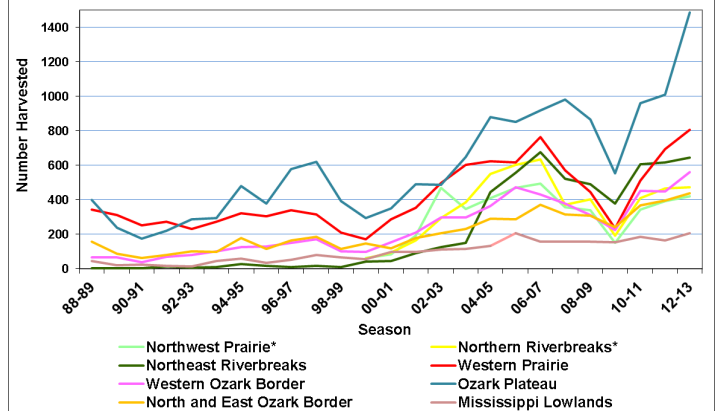


Results

Bobcat harvest has increased over time. In 1957 only 3 bobcats were taken, while in 2012, a record number were harvested. Trappers typically account for over 60% of the bobcat harvest. Hunter harvest increases during years when deer season overlaps more days with bobcat season. Recent prices paid for bobcats have varied from an average low of \$9 in 1992 to \$115 in 2012. Most bobcat harvest occurs in December, and most trappers catch <3 bobcats annually. We monitor Missouri's bobcat harvest by zoological region. Except for three years, 1989-1991, the Ozark Plateau has produced more bobcats than any other zoological region in the state. Note - *Harvest in the Northwest Prairie and the Northern Riverbreaks zoological regions did not open until the 1999-2000 season.



Historic Harvest by Zoological Region



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